

U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service
U.S. Border Patrol – McAllen Sector – Chief Jose E. Garza
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NEWS RELEASE

November 19, 2002

60 Pounds of Cocaine Seized at Sarita Checkpoint

Illicit Powder Hidden in Secret Compartment Worth 1.9 Million

McALLEN, Texas – Chief Patrol Agent Jose E. Garza announces that Border Patrol Agents assigned to the Kingsville Border Patrol Station's Traffic Checkpoint in Sarita, Texas, arrested two men for possession of 60 pounds of cocaine valued at \$1,920,000 last night.

On Nov. 18, 2002, at approximately 8:15 p.m., Agents working the Traffic Checkpoint located on Highway 77 in Sarita, Texas, south of Kingsville inspected a beige Ford Contour, and its occupants. A Border Patrol Agent utilizing his canine partner conducted a non-intrusive exterior inspection of the vehicle. The canine alerted positively to the vehicle, indicating a presence of narcotics or human cargo.

The two male occupants of the vehicle, one a United States Citizen and the other a Permanent Resident Alien, were directed to the secondary inspection area, where the driver consented to a search of his vehicle. Another canine sniff was conducted and the canine alerted to the trunk of the vehicle. Upon closer inspection of the vehicle, the agents found a trap door located under the back seat of the vehicle. Further inspection of the secret compartment revealed 25 bundles of a white powdery substance, which later tested positive for Cocaine.

The two subjects were arrested and charged with Possession of a Controlled Substance and turned over to the Drug Enforcement Agency in Corpus Christi, Texas. The two subjects will be arraigned later today.

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